

Morgan Hill Library Now Closed on Mondays

The Morgan Hill Library, and all libraries in the Santa Clara County Library system, are now closed on Mondays, due to a \$1.1 million budget shortfall this fiscal year for the County Library system.

The libraries affected are located in Campbell, Cupertino, Gilroy, Los Altos, Milpitas, Morgan Hill, and Saratoga. Also cut back will be two branches operated by the Santa Clara County Library – Alum Rock and Woodland – and the popular Bookmobile that serves outlying neighborhoods, child care centers, senior centers and migrant labor camps.

The Monday closure results from the possible loss of \$5.3 million in June 2005 when the Benefit Assessment tax expires. This is a significant revenue source for the Santa Clara County Library system, and additional cutbacks may be needed. The Library Joint Powers Authority is considering whether to ask voters in 2005 to continue the library assessment. A measure on the March 2004 Election Ballot that would have extended the assessment fell just short of the required two-thirds vote for approval.

"I hate to think about what kinds of cuts in library service we are going to have to consider next year if we don't have the revenue from the benefit assessment," said Richard Lowenthal, Chair of the Library Joint Powers Authority. "Those funds represent 21% of our operating budget, so the cutbacks could be severe."

The Santa Clara County Library has been recognized three years in a row by the national *Hennen's American Public Libraries Rating* for providing high quality, cost effective services. The Library system has a diverse collection of materials in more than 25 languages and in many formats such as CDs, DVDs, videos, audiobooks, and electronic full-text databases. The Santa Clara County Library web page, www.santaclaracountylib.org, offers access to the library catalog, electronic research databases and other information about library services, programs and hours.

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